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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Geng et al.

Serial No.: 10/038,355

Filed: January 4, 2002

Entitled: Service Clusters and Method in a Processing System with Failover Capability

Attorney Docket No.: 112153.126

Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Examiner: TBA

Group Art Unit 2152

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on the date indicated below.

Date: March 13, 2002

Patricia Corrigan
Patricia Corrigan

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Commissioner for Patents:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-captioned application as follows:

In the Specification:

At page 1, beginning as the first line beneath the title of the application, please insert therefor the following paragraph:

--CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority to U.S. provisional application serial number 60/285,296, filed on April 20, 2001, which is hereby incorporated by reference.--

A clean copy of the first page of the specification is enclosed.

No fees are believed to be due in connection with this response. However, if a fee is due or a credit owed in connection with the matter, please charge it to our Deposit Account No. 08-0219.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 13, 2002



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Service Clusters and Method in a Processing System

with Failover Capability

Cross Reference to Related Application

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This application claims priority to U.S. provisional application serial number 60/285,296, filed on April 20, 2001, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

Background

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to computing systems for enterprises and application service providers and, more specifically, to processing systems having virtualized communication networks and storage for quick deployment and reconfiguration.

2. Discussion of Related Art

In current enterprise computing and application service provider environments, personnel from multiple information technology (IT) functions (electrical, networking, etc.) must participate to deploy processing and networking resources. Consequently, because of scheduling and other difficulties in coordinating activities from multiple departments, it can take weeks or months to deploy a new computer server. This lengthy, manual process increases both human and equipment costs, and delays the launch of applications.

Moreover, because it is difficult to anticipate how much processing power applications will require, managers typically over-provision the amount of computational power. As a result, data-center computing resources often go unutilized or under-utilized.

If more processing power is eventually needed than originally provisioned, the various IT functions will again need to coordinate activities to deploy more or improved servers, connect them to the communication and storage networks and so forth. This task gets increasingly difficult as the systems become larger.